



**National Council for
Interior Design Qualification**

Representative Andrew Meisner, Chairman
House Commerce Committee
House Office Building
P. O. Box 30014
Lansing, Michigan 48909

September 10, 2007

RE: House Bills 4770, 4771 and 4772

Chairman Meisner and Honorable members of the House Commerce Committee:

I apologize that I am not able to attend the hearing on September 11, 2007.

The National Council for Interior Design Qualification, Inc. (NCIDQ) is composed of the interior design regulatory boards in the United States and Canada. As such, our mission is to protect the public's health, safety and welfare—not advance the profession. One of the ways that we support our member regulatory boards is through the development and administration of a professional licensure examination focused on those aspects of the interior design profession that affect health, safety and welfare. Our Examination covers subjects as diverse as knowledge of building systems (mechanical, electrical, structural and plumbing), building codes and standards, construction costs and methods and many more that overlap with the knowledge architects possess, plus some that architects are not tested on. How an interior designer puts that knowledge to use may differ from the way an architect puts it to use, but interior designers need this knowledge to be an effective member of a design team.

Some have made the assertion that the NCIDQ Examination is not up to the same standards as the Architect Registration Examination prepared by the National Council of Architectural Registration Boards (NCARB) on behalf of its member boards. I have the personal knowledge to refute that statement. From 1990 to 1998 I was the Director of Professional Development (previously titled Director of Examinations Development) at NCARB. As the staff person responsible for guiding the development of the Architect Registration Examination for those years and now as the Executive Director of NCIDQ I can assure you that the NCIDQ examination follows the same psychometric guidelines as the ARE developed by NCARB. Our vendor, ACT is equally competent to guide NCIDQ in the development of a professional, high-stakes licensure examination.

Licensure and certification examinations must adhere to rigorous standards addressing critical matters of validity and fairness. Significant among these are the *Uniform Guidelines on Employee Selection Procedures* (U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, 1978) and the *Standards for Education and Psychological Testing* (American Educational Research Association, American Psychological Association and the National Council of Measurement in Education, 1999). The National Commission for Certifying Agencies' *Standards for the*

A Creditation of Certification Programs (2002) also provides specific psychometric guidance for such tests. These standards govern all aspects of the development, validation and scoring of NCIDQ's examination program.

The NCIDQ Examination includes two comprehensive multiple-choice tests. The first of these, consisting of 150 questions, is titled *Principles and Practices of Interior Design*. It addresses the domains of project organization, programming, schematics and design development. The second multiple-choice examination, consisting of 125 questions, is titled *Contract Documents and Administration*. It addresses the domains of contract documents and contract administration. Many questions on both of these examinations incorporate drawings, pictures, symbols and textual formats typical in the interior design profession, requiring candidates to recall, apply and analyze information.

The NCIDQ Examination also features a practicum, *Schematics and Design Development* that requires candidates to produce a design solution. Candidates develop a program based on a multifunctional facility. The Examination is scored according to an analytical framework by qualified jurors who have completed a comprehensive training program.

Individuals can take the NCIDQ examination by qualifying through one of two routes. The first is to meet NCIDQ's education and experience requirements. The second is to apply directly with one of our member boards by meeting that board's education and experience requirements. For candidates who apply directly to NCIDQ, the requirements are the following:

A baccalaureate degree in programs of no less than 120 semester or 180 quarter credit hours of which 60 semester or 90 quarter hours are interior design-related plus 3,520 hours of work experience.

OR

A certificate, degree or diploma with no less than 60 semester or 90 quarter credit hours in interior design-related coursework plus 5,280 hours of work experience.

OR

A certificate, degree or diploma with no less than 40 semester or 60 quarter credit hours of interior design-related coursework plus 7,040 hours of work experience.

Designing buildings is a challenging, complex process. Users of buildings should have the same level of assurance that the entire team—interior designers, engineers, landscape architects, architects, contractors and sub-contractors—are regulated, tested and held accountable through state regulation. I believe that the bills before you will bring Michigan in line with other states that are currently regulating the complete spectrum of design professionals in order to assure public protection and I urge you to support them.

Sincerely,



Jeffrey F. Kenney, AIA
Executive Director